

gibca SAFETY TOOLBOX TALKS



Did You Plan to Fall Today?

Most people don't plan to fall. When we wear harnesses, however, aren't we anticipating the possibility of falling? And if we fall, did we plan to be rescued? Planning for the moment you may need fall protection equipment is one of the most important things you can do to keep yourself safe should you fall.

Here are some questions to ask yourself:

- Has your personal fall protection equipment been inspected?
- Do you know how to wear and adjust it properly?
- Have you selected the appropriate personal fall protection equipment?
- If using a 6 foot lanyard, did you do the fall distance calculation?
- Will your anchorage point hold 5000 lbs per employee attached?
- Is your connector in good condition?
- If you fall, will you swing like a pendulum?
- Is any part of your personal fall arrest system going to be over an edge?

When planning to fall it's also important to plan the rescue. Once a worker has fallen and is suspended, time is critical because of Suspension Trauma (Harness Hang Syndrome), the loss of consciousness due to a victim being held upright with limited movement for a period of time. Harnesses can become deadly when a worker is suspended for prolonged duration because of lack of blood flow in the body.

Things to think about:

- Does your fall protection have suspension trauma safety straps that extends allowable "hang time" for conscious victims?
- Can you minimize potential fall exposures, such as using a scissor lift or scaffolding for high reaches?

Your safety starts with planning. Plan to fall.